



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COUNTY URGES RESIDENTS TO REPORT DESTRUCTIVE ORIENTAL FRUIT FLIES ***Fruit Flies Found in Escondido Last Week; Treatment Being Applied***

County residents are being urged not to remove backyard fruits and vegetables if they live in the Hidden Meadows area of Escondido because they may be infested with Oriental Fruit Flies, the County Department of Agriculture, Weights and Measures, announced today.

Two male Oriental Fruit Flies were discovered last week in Escondido, triggering treatments by the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) to eradicate the insect. Approximately, 10 square miles in the Hidden Meadows area of Escondido will be treated. Although no quarantine has been declared, homeowners and people traveling through Escondido are urged not to remove backyard fruits and vegetables, which could carry the fruit fly to other areas in the county.

The treatment is known as "male annihilation" and is a method that has been proven successful in the past. "Male annihilation" consists of workers applying a small patch of a pheromone, mixed with a very small dose of pesticide to telephone poles or trees, approximately eight feet off the ground. The male fruit flies are attracted to the pheromone, consume the pesticide and die before they can mate. Treatments will be reapplied every 14 days (weather permitting) for at least 12 weeks, for a minimum of six applications.

The Oriental Fruit Fly is known to attack more than 230 different fruits, vegetables and plants. Damage occurs when the female lays eggs inside the fruit and the eggs hatch into maggots that tunnel through the flesh of the fruit, making it unfit for consumption.

This destructive pest was first found in California in 1960. A number of major infestations throughout the state have been successfully eradicated since then. The Oriental Fruit Fly could cause millions of dollars in damage annually if it were allowed to become established in California.

Residents are asked to report suspicious flies to the **CDFA PEST HOTLINE at 1-800-491-1899 or 619-698-1046**. If your yard contains fruit trees and you would like to have a fruit fly trap placed on your property call, **1-800-300-8727 (TRAP)**. For more information on Oriental Fruit Fly, please visit the CDFA's Web Site at http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/phpps/pdep/oriental_ff_profile.htm.

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